

First, let us tone down our rhetoric and listen to each other as well as talk.

Second, let us respect each others concerns over tax cuts, Medicare, education, and other items as valid.

And finally, let us not miss this historic opportunity to reach a compromise that will balance our budget in a fair and equitable way.

Americans are counting on us.

WE NEED A BALANCED BUDGET NOW

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, we are in the middle of the most important debate in decades—do we balance the budget or do we allow the out of control spending to continue. If we do not balance the budget now, it will never happen.

We have worked for months on developing a plan that would protect future generations and the country's fiscal solvency. Our balanced budget offers the American people a dividend.

Just a month ago, President Clinton agreed to work with us to achieve a balanced budget using CBO numbers. However, once again the President has back peddled playing politics as usual. He is more concerned with power and spending taxpayer money than he is about our children's future. We have offered a reasonable, responsible balanced budget which benefits the American people.

President Clinton, it is time for to put the political games aside and start working on behalf of the American people.

LET US AGREE ON A BALANCED BUDGET

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a tragically historic time, because the Republicans for the first time in history have shut down the United States Government two times in 1 year. There are faces to this shutdown. As I listen to the cries in my district in Houston, various Federal offices that serve the American people shut down, doors closed, but yet there are also faces behind those who work in those offices, with families on the brink of Christmas and in the midst of Hanukkah.

All Americans are suffering. And then I might ask about the mother who lives in the Houston area, unemployed, without any support systems, an 8-month-old who has respiratory problems, a 5-year-old with heart problems, and an 8-year-old with a brain tumor. That mother needs Medicaid, yet on the backs of those children and that mother, this Republican Congress wants to balance the budget.

Oh, we all want to balance the budget. The Democrats have stood their ground on that. The Democratic helped craft and pass a resolution that allowed this Government to remain open, signed on November 19, that said we would balance the budget, protecting Medicaid, education, Medicare, agriculture, national defense, and the veterans.

Where are the Republican members who would come to the table to pass a clean continuing resolution. This is a season to be joyous. This is a season to stand for the American people. Let us get a budget that we can all agree with.

CEO'S CALL FOR END TO GRIDLOCK

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the President failed again to offer a balanced budget, he proved once more that old Democrats do not morph into new Democrats. In fact, it is clear that old Democrats do not even die, they just fake away. They fake at balancing the budget, they fake at negotiations, they fake at ending welfare as we know it, and they fake at inhaling.

Well, today the CEO's across America have had enough. They have taken out this full page ad in the Washington Post saying end the gridlock, Mr. President. These are folks from Ford, General Motors, Circuit City, Toys-R-Us. What they are asking the President to do is what the Congress has already done: Use realistic numbers and the CBO scoring to balance the budget in 7 years. And I would say if the President will come to the negotiating table and do what he promised to do 3 weeks ago, then we can resolve this.

I, for one Member of Congress, agree with the CEO's and the major employers across the Nation. I am going to sign my name to this. I invite my fellow Republicans to do the same, and I invite my fellow Democrats. If you agree with this, please put your name on this in front of the American people.

CEO'S DEMAND MORE CORPORATE WELFARE

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, OK, everybody, watch who signs up. Watch who signs up, because we now know what the issue is. These are the CEO's demanding that they have more corporate welfare and they want us to kill Medicare. They want us to kill the things that mean a lot to the middle class so they can continue on with their golden parachutes, the great tax cut that they have been promised, and they want their Christmas to come.

Well, I am here not representing the CEO's, the fat cats of America. I am

here representing the average American. Never have we had a Congress so stupid that it closed the Government down once, but twice. These Republicans do not learn. But how pleased I am they smoked out their supporters.

I hope you guys all sign up, back the CEO's of America. Be proud you are for corporate welfare. I am proud I am not. I am for Medicare, I am for Medicaid, I am for student loans, and I am for standing up for what built this country.

LAST CHANCE FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, let me just suggest to the gentlewoman from Colorado that I am for those same things. I am for protecting Medicare, for protecting education, I am for protecting Medicaid.

Mr. Speaker, this is the last best chance perhaps that we will have to balance this budget. We have a window of opportunity right how to do the right thing for the American people.

The Republican majority has a plan. I do not see one coming from the President. He says he wants to balance the budget, to produce a plan, yet he has not produced a plan. He has not even shown us his plan. Instead of working with the Republican majority to find some common ground, he continues to mislead America with imaginary spending cuts on Medicare, Medicaid, education, and so forth.

The President's philosophy seems to be to scare the children, scare the poor, scare the veterans, and scare the seniors. As 1995 comes to an end, the American people need to know that the only thing standing between them and a balanced budget, lower taxes, lower interest rates, and more jobs, is the President, President Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, the majority stands ready to work with the President. It is time for him to provide leadership and help us end the days of spend now, and worry later.

PRESENT A RESPONSIBLE BALANCED BUDGET

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, last time the Republicans shut down the Government because the Speaker was unhappy with his seat on Air Force One.

Now, the Republicans have shut down the Government because the President will not accept a budget agreement that would devastate health care for the elderly and the poor while giving a huge tax break to the rich.

The Republicans are holding the Government hostage in order to force their